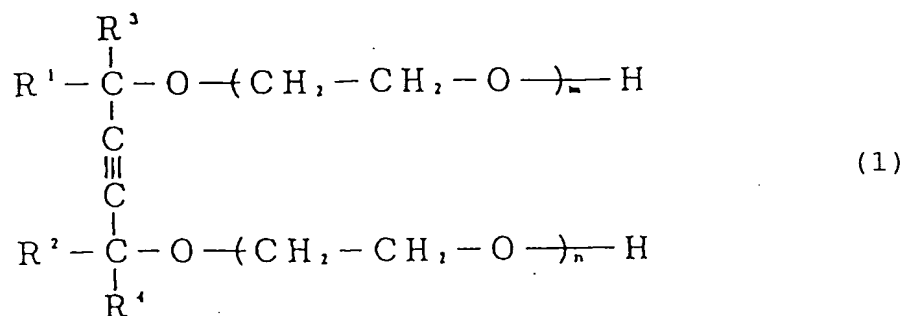


IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1 - 3 (cancelled)

Claim 4 (currently amended) The An aqueous ink composition comprising at least water, a first polymer, a second polymer or copolymer which is a sulfonyl group-containing (co) polymer, a pigment dispersed by the first polymer, and an ultra-penetrating agent, wherein the sulfonyl group-containing (co) polymer is present in the form of an emulsion, and wherein the ultra-penetrating agent is a combination of a compound represented by the following formula (1) and triethylene glycol monobutyl ether:



wherein, $0 \leq m + n \leq 50$, and R^1 , R^2 , R^3 and R^4 each independently is an alkyl group,

according to claim 3, wherein the ~~non-diene-based~~, sulfonyl group-containing (co) polymer is an acryl-based, sulfonyl group-containing (co) polymer.

Claim 5 (previously presented) The aqueous ink composition according to claim 4, wherein the pigment dispersed by the first polymer is a pigment dispersed in an aqueous medium by an acrylic (co) polymer having an acid value of 100 or more.

Claims 6 - 10 (cancelled)